

Northville Public Schools

Oral Exit Report

December 9, 2009

Quality Assurance Review Team

District Accreditation

A Picture of AdvancED



World's Largest Educational Community

- 27,000 public and private schools
- 30 states and Navajo Nation
- Department of Defense Education Activity
- 65 countries (including Latin America)
- 15 million students
- 18,000 volunteers
- 3 million plus teachers

AdvancED

Dedicated to Advancing Excellence in Education Through:

Accreditation

Public, Non Public, International Services, Post-Secondary

Professional Learning

Conferences, Workshops, Training, Consulting, eLearning

Innovation

Research, Knowledge Management, New Product
Development, Marketing

Information & Education Technologies

IT Infrastructure, Management System, Education
Technologies, Development and Support

District Accreditation

A national protocol for school districts committed to systemic, systematic, and sustainable improvement

- Builds capacity of the district and its schools to increase and sustain student learning
- Stimulates and improves effectiveness and efficiency throughout the organization

District Accreditation

Applies a systems approach to improvement

- Examines how all elements (*people, processes, departments and operations*) of the district work in a unified, coordinated and integrated way in pursuit of a shared vision

Promotes improvement that is continuous not episodic

Strengthens efforts to meet accountability requirements and encourages growth beyond compliance to achieve excellence

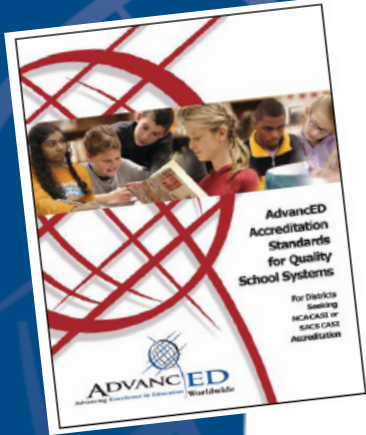
Components of Accreditation

To earn and maintain **District Accreditation**, districts must:

- Meet the **AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems**
- Engage in **Continuous Improvement**
- Demonstrate **Quality Assurance** through Internal and External Review

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Accreditation Standards for Quality Systems



1. **Vision and Purpose**
2. **Governance and Leadership**
3. **Teaching and Learning**
4. **Documenting and Using Results**
5. **Resources and Support Systems**
6. **Stakeholder Communications and Relationships**
7. **Commitment to Continuous Improvement**

The District is Expected to....

- ◆ Meet the AdvancED Standards for Quality Systems
- ◆ Identify and guide the implementation of a systemic continuous improvement process
- ◆ Monitor all schools and departments through a quality assurance process
- ◆ Prepare and host a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) every five years
- ◆ Respond to the recommendations from the QAR team

Schools are Expected to

- ◆ Meet the AdvancED Accreditation **Standards for Quality Schools**
- ◆ Implement the district's continuous improvement process
- ◆ Participate in the district's quality assurance process

Quality Assurance External Review Process

Every five years the district hosts a visit by a national team of professional peers

- The team represents NCA CASI, SACS CASI, and AdvancED
- The team meets with district stakeholders and visits a representative sample of schools
- The team presents high quality feedback and makes an accreditation recommendation
- The Review provides district and community with validation and recognition

Quality Assurance External Review Process

The team examines the effectiveness of the district in meeting the requirements of accreditation

- Determines the extent to which the district meets the AdvancED quality standards
- Evaluates the value and impact of the district's improvement efforts
- Judges the efficacy of the district's methods for quality assurance

QAR Team Activities

The Team Collects Data

- Listens to district presentations
- Interviews samples of all district stakeholder groups
- Examines relevant documents and artifacts
- Visits a representative sample of schools
- Observes practices and the learning environment

The Team Engages in Professional Deliberations

- Uses evidence to guide analysis, discussion, and decision-making

Data Collection

During the on-site Quality Assurance Review, team members visited 7 schools and interviewed:

- 6 current board members and one board member elect
- 27 administrators
- 89 teachers
- 25 support staff
- 54 parents, community, and business partners
- 71 students

TOTAL of 273 stakeholders

Criteria Used to Arrive at the Team's Findings

- When reviewing evidence to arrive at its findings, the team:
 - Sought a district perspective;
 - Pursued evidence that could be corroborated through multiple sources;
 - Examined the context and capacity of the district in relation to its vision, mission, and beliefs; and
 - Applied the criteria for accreditation.

The QAR Team

Delivers high quality feedback

- Assess each standard and writes narratives that describe evidence, highlight strong points and suggest opportunities for improvement
- Provide commendations that identify and celebrate noteworthy accomplishments
- Identify areas needing improvement and develop recommendations to help the district get better

Communicates findings in oral and written formats

Makes an accreditation recommendation for national review

Team's Findings

Strengths

- Strong and effective practices, processes, or systems which benefit the school district

Commendations

- Significant accomplishments in meeting and/or exceeding accreditation standards and requirements

Challenges

- Limitations and/or barriers that may be impacting (or have the potential to impact) the district's performance and effectiveness

Recommendations

- Actions that will enhance district effectiveness and improve student learning

Strengths

- Stakeholder involvement in the Northville Public Schools is extraordinary and reflects a high level of commitment to the district. Excellence is the mantra of Northville and all stakeholders are proud of their achievements and the district's effectiveness.
- Communications abound in the Northville Public Schools. There are numerous ways for stakeholders to stay connected to the district and to the individual schools.
- The Superintendent does an extraordinary job of representing the district and as a result, is well respected by all stakeholders.

Commendations

The Quality Assurance Review Team commends Northville Public Schools for:

- **an extraordinary culture of respect and pride among all its stakeholders.** From the superintendent and his central office staff to the school principals and their staffs, there is stakeholder support for the work they do and their commitment to student achievement and overall excellence. Not only are parents and community members proud of their schools, but they value and appreciate the well-rounded education students are receiving. Pride and support is evident through the authentic involvement of stakeholders in a variety of activities. When stakeholders support their schools and are engaged in the district's work, both learners and the community benefit.

Commendations

- The **district of Northville Public Schools demonstrates strong shared leadership.** From the Superintendent to cabinet members to principals to teacher leaders to students to parent and community stakeholders, there is a collaborative approach to continuously achieving the district's vision, mission, and goals. A high degree of dedication and involvement by all stakeholders provides system cohesiveness and creates a culture unified in its beliefs and actions that will help to make the vision a reality.

Commendations

- Northville Public Schools honors the purpose of **District Accreditation by aligning the work of the district and its schools through a continuous focus on student achievement and improvement.** A systematic and systemic approach to continuous improvement is demonstrated through the establishment and implementation of the District Improvement Team (DSIT). This creative option provides for system-wide communications among stakeholders and fosters a climate of collaboration and trust among stakeholders. School staffs share their progress with pride and request ideas and suggestions for furthering and expanding their improvement efforts. A climate of trust and respect has been clearly established in the Northville Public Schools. This climate allows stakeholders to continually seek and engage in quality improvement efforts.

Challenges

- The current economic situation in Michigan represents uncertain times for Northville. The district is accustomed to providing high quality services to its stakeholders, and as a result, students flourish. In light of the potential decline in revenues, it will be a challenge for the Northville Public Schools to maintain its extraordinary level of excellence.
- The implementation of a new planning template by the Michigan Department of Education will present a need for Northville to revise and adopt its template for school improvement plans.

Recommendations

- **The Quality Assurance Review Team recommends that Northville Public Schools:**
 - **Strengthen the alignment between the Northville Public Schools vision and its Graduate Profile/Adult Roles expectations** (e.g., Analytical Thinker, Effective Communicator, Quality Contributor) by clearly defining measurements or assessment to determine if students are meeting these high expectations. The district's vision supports the development of a well-rounded student through expectations associated with "continuous learner" and "world class citizen". While students demonstrate high academic achievement in all areas, there is insufficient evidence indicating student accomplishment of the Graduate Profile /Adult Roles. Identifying higher level expectations for students and means for measuring progress will further enhance Northville Public Schools' vision for producing world class citizens.

Recommendations

- **Expand the current assessment system by incorporating formative and alternative methods into the current plan.** The district utilizes a variety of state and district tests and is attempting to incorporate common assessments in certain core areas. However, team members noted the inconsistency of the use of formative and common assessments in the school settings. The team recommends an initiative be put in place that promotes the value and credibility of formative methods, establishes a common language and deepens understanding of how this data can be used at the district, department, school, teacher, and student level to inform instructional practice and improve learning. Incorporating multiple formative measures into the district's assessment plan will broaden its scope and add needed richness, depth and balance to the current assessment and accountability program.

Next Steps

- **A written report of the findings will be submitted within 30 business days**
- **After receipt of the report, the district is expected to:**
 - Review and communicate the findings
 - Address the recommendations
 - Monitor school and system accreditation standards and improvement efforts on ongoing basis
 - Submit the Accreditation Progress Report.
- **After the next meeting of the AdvancED Accreditation Commission (January and June) reports will be available for public access**

Accreditation Recommendation

- The Quality Assurance Review Team recommends to the AdvancED Accreditation Commission that the Northville Public Schools be awarded District Accreditation as a quality school system.
- Once reviewed and approved by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, the district and all its schools are granted a 5-year term accreditation.

Final Thoughts

On behalf of the Quality Assurance Team, I extend:

- Our **appreciation** for your hospitality, support, and professionalism;
- Our **respect** and acknowledgement of the quality of the school district; and
- Our **congratulations** for your progress toward achieving District Accreditation as a quality system.

*AdvancED District Accreditation
for Quality Systems
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*...helping schools
and school systems
improve student
learning*

